

Update on the Reorganization of the California Department of Health Services

November 13, 2006

This update on the California Department of Health Services (CDHS) reorganization covers four areas – the status of Senate Bill 162, the redirection of existing positions, the employee assignment process, and a survey of CDHS employees.

Status of SB 162

On September 14, 2006, the Governor signed Senate Bill 162 (Ortiz). It was then filed with the Secretary of State and identified as Chapter 241, Statutes of 2006. SB 162 enacts the California Public Health Act of 2006, which establishes the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) within the existing California Health and Human Services Agency and provides statutory authority to transfer the responsibilities of certain programs from CDHS to the new CDPH, effective July 1, 2007. CDHS will be renamed as the Department of Health Care Services (CDHCS).

Recruitment Plan

The reorganization requires that a number of positions within CDHS are needed to provide essential administrative and management functions for the two Departments. Executive Staff has identified 57 existing positions within CDHS for redirection. Over the next several weeks, the offices and programs receiving the redirected positions will begin reclassifying them and the recruitment process will be forthcoming.

The Department's goal is to complete the reclassification and recruitment process for the analytical, technical, support, and first line supervisor positions needed for the reorganization as quickly as possible. Filling the redirected positions expeditiously will give programs sufficient lead time to efficiently divide workload, replicate systems, train staff, and make a smooth transition from CDHS to CDPH and CDHCS. This also provides staff (newly hired and existing) the opportunity to learn their new roles and establish working relationships with the programs they will serve before the reorganization officially takes place.

Employee Assignment Process

Departmental employees have inquired about the process for assigning staff to CDPH and CDHCS. The Executive Staff developed a process that balances management's need to direct the business needs of the departments while recognizing that employee choice in jobs is a critical factor in job satisfaction and productivity. This process has been shared with CDHS employees, management, and the employee labor organizations.

The process will proceed along program lines. For instance, if the program an employee currently works in (such as the Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Control) will be placed in CDPH, then the staff from that program will be assigned to CDPH. The same is true for programs which will remain in CDHCS.

Other programs will be divided between both Departments, such as the Administration Division and the Office of Public Affairs. Assigning employees in these programs to either CDPH or CDHCS will follow the process outlined below.

1. Management will identify units, sections, or assignments that are Department specific and assign staff in those units, sections, or assignments to the corresponding Department without regard to state service seniority. For example, Program Support Branch has a unit currently responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Richmond Laboratory Complex. The analytical, technical, support and supervisory staff in this unit will be assigned to CDPH without regard to seniority.
2. Management will also identify skills-based business functions that each department must have. Positions in these units, sections, and assignments will be divided between Departments as workload dictates. However, employees with the identified expertise will have the choice of which department they will work in based upon their state service seniority as currently captured in Human Resources Information System (HRIS).

Example: Both Departments require staff with Feasibility Study Report (FSR) experience. Currently, ITSD has four staff in the same classification, only two of whom have FSR experience. Therefore, one of the two employees technically skilled and experienced in FSRs will be assigned to each Department. Of these two employees, the one with the highest seniority will be given his/her choice of Departments. The other employee with FSR experience will then be assigned to the other Department, regardless of whether he/she has more seniority than the two remaining employees who are not skilled and experienced in FSRs.

3. After steps 1 and 2 above are completed, all remaining staff will be allowed to choose their assigned Department based on state service seniority as currently captured in HRIS. However, such choice will be limited to their existing classification within the same Unit/Section/Branch or the corresponding Unit/Section/Branch in the new Department.
4. Employees will have 30 days to review and challenge their state service seniority (as currently captured in HRIS) before the selection process begins.

Please Note: Verified and existing legal settlement agreements previously implemented and currently in force relating to job restrictions and placement must be considered and may supersede the assignment process outlined above.

Employee Survey

The Reorganization Project Management Team has developed an anonymous survey to capture the opinion of CDHS employees about several different aspects of the reorganization process. The main goals of the survey are to:

1. Gauge how effective the Department has been in keeping CDHS staff informed about the progress of reorganization efforts.
2. Assess how CDHS employees (rank and file employees as well as supervisors, managers, and executives) feel about the reorganization.
3. Identify the issues of greatest concern to staff so that the Change Management Consultant can focus on areas requiring improved communication and corrective action.

The survey has been tested by Section Chiefs and Above. It was finalized based upon their responses and will be sent electronically to all staff within CDHS later this week. The survey is voluntary and responses are anonymous. We hope you take a few minutes to respond so the Reorganization Project Management Team will have the data needed for effective Change Management and smooth implementation of the reorganization.

As always, if you have any questions or comments regarding the reorganization or the information contained in this update, please send us an e-mail at Reorg@dhs.ca.gov. Thank you.